



Takoma Park Recreation Department

Takoma Park Adult Co-Ed Softball **2021 Season Rules**

1. The League

Philosophy: The league's purpose is to provide a recreational co-ed softball league to its community, with emphasis on good sportsmanship, fun, and exercise, with everyone getting a good chance to play.

The City of Takoma Park Recreation values the health and wellness of all our participants, contractors, and staff. In accordance with the Governor's and County Executive's orders, Center for Disease Control guidelines we have set forth the following rules and guidelines for softball league play. These rules and guidelines are designed to mitigate any potential spread of COVID-19 within our community.

Administration: The league will operate under the jurisdiction of the Takoma Park Recreation Department. Questions and discrepancies should be brought to the League Director's attention for review. Guideline changes may be made at the League Director's discretion.

Regular Season Format: Teams will play seven (7) double headers, totaling 14 regular season games; this does not include the Championship Weekend. The winning team is responsible for calling or e-mailing the League Coordinator, Kristen Boone, with the scores from the games.

Playoff Format: Top (4) teams will play. Team seeded number one (home team) will play team seeded number four (visiting team). Team seeded number two (home team) will play team seeded number three (visiting team). The winner of each game will play each other for the championship, with the highest seeded team being the home team.

2. Coaches

The coach shall be their Team Representative, and is responsible for:

- a. Being the liaison between the League Director and their team members
- b. Attending all coaches meetings
- c. The conduct of team players and spectators
- d. Ensuring that all roster information is correct and/or updated at all times
- e. Reinforcing the Recreation Philosophy and COVID-19 Guidelines to all players
- f. Keeping team bench and surrounding area free of trash

3. Team membership

Anyone at least 16 years of age is eligible to play in this league, except any "A" League players.

4. COVID Safety Guidelines

In addition to the game rules below, our league will include the following to ensure the health and safety of all participants and to alleviate the potential spread of COVID-19.

Physical Distancing

- All persons should practice physical distancing of six feet wherever possible from individuals not residing within their household.

Face Coverings

- All persons over the age of 2 years old are required to wear a face covering when leaving their residences and are likely to come into contact with another person.

Hand Hygiene

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Players, coaches, and umpires are encouraged to wash their hands at home prior to and after attending a program and bring their own hand sanitizer for personal use.



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Bathrooms

- Bathrooms may not be available at the fields. Please plan for them not being available for use and plan accordingly.

Congregating and Spectators

- Teams are limited to bringing a total 12 people, including players, coaches and those needing guardianship.
- No spectators are permitted except for children needing guardianship due to childcare issues.
- Teams are responsible for ensuring adherence to health and safety guidelines for all players, coaches and those needing guardianship associated with their team.
- Congregating both before and after the program either in the program sites or the parking lots is not allowed.

Rules and Guidelines for Game Day and the Field-of-Play

- All participants should self-check for symptoms related to COVID-19 prior to attending the program. If exhibiting symptoms, possibly exposed, or have encountered someone recently diagnosed with COVID-19, please do not attend your games.

Equipment

- Players should avoid sharing equipment when possible by using their own equipment. It is suggested that batting gloves be worn on both hands, during offensive and defensive play.
- When equipment must be shared it shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use with a Recommend use of EPA-registered household disinfectant. ([List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#))
- Balls shall be supplied to the umpire still in the wrapper or box.
- Umpires should limit their contact with the ball, and catchers should retrieve foul balls and passed balls when possible.
- Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by participating players, coaches, and umpires.
- Used balls or back up balls should be wiped down/ disinfected by the teams before game use or when the ball goes out of play prior to returning to game use.
- Players are recommended to bring their own marked water containers or non-alcoholic fluids.

Pre-Game

- All players, coaches, and umpires are required to wear a face covering.
- All persons over the age of 2 years old must wear face coverings.
- Players, coaches and umpires shall maintain a physical distance (at least six feet apart) on and off the field, before and after games. Avoid the use of the dugouts and teams are encouraged to spread out in outside areas around the dugout.
- Bats: should be laid outside of the dugout, for pregame inspection. The umpire can review bat(s) any time during the game.

Pre-Game Meeting

- One captain per team will conduct a pregame meeting at home plate, requiring 6 feet physical distancing during ground rules. Coaches and umpire are required to wear face coverings during pregame.

Game Play

- All players, coaches and umpires are required to wear a face covering.



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- All persons over the age of 2 years old must wear face coverings. The catcher and umpire shall position themselves during a player's at-bat to meet the physical distance requirements.
- Only one On-Deck Batter (for warm-ups) is permitted inside the fenced field at a time and should be over 6 feet from the batting area. No additional offensive players (except the batter, base runners or base coaches) are permitted on the fenced field.
- Base coaches should distance themselves appropriately (6') from base runners and defensive players.
- It is recommended to use hand sanitizer frequently throughout the game.
- All players and coaches are to refrain from spitting.
- Pregame/during game play/post-game handshakes, high fives, home run celebrations or team huddles are not allowed.

Post-Game

- Please take all your trash and belongings with you.
- Players and coaches should vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of their game.
- Do not congregate in the parking lot or other areas at the field.

COVID Positive

- If a player, coach or umpire is a confirmed COVID-19 case or is exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, immediately contact Kristen Boone, by calling 240-687-4131.

Failure to Observe Safety Rules and Recommendations

- The safety and wellness of our participants, contractors and staff is paramount and we need your help to keep everyone safe. Staff and umpires will work together to educate players and spectators with reminders when appropriate.
- Those who refuse to comply with the safety rules may receive the following:
 - Verbal Warning
 - Player Ejections/Suspension
 - Forfeiture of Game
 - Removal from League

5. Standard Game Rules

Official NSA Rules will govern league play, with these exceptions:

- Each team must play at least three female players for the entire game. If a team can field only two female players, they will then field nine players with an automatic out in place of the missing female. Furthermore, the automatic out will be last in the line-up (#10 in batting order or lower). However, if a third woman arrives before the first inning is over, she will take the last spot in the line-up (#10 in batting order or lower) and the automatic out is retracted. If a team cannot field at least two female players, that team will forfeit the game.
- A forfeit will be declared by the umpire if a team fails to appear ten minutes past the scheduled game time.
- In a doubleheader, if a team cannot field eight players for each game, that game will be a forfeit. That team then has 30 minutes to field a team for the second game before a forfeit is declared. For example, if a team forfeits the first game of a doubleheader at 9:30, they will have until 10:00 to field a full team for the second game.
- A designated hitter (DH) will be allowed as an eleventh batter and may bat anywhere in the lineup.



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- A courtesy runner for any hitter with running-related disability or injury will be permitted, once the hitter has reached 1st base. The courtesy runner shall be the person of the same sex who made the last out before the designated hitter's turn at bat. This rule is an option for each team, not a requirement. Courtesy runners are not allowed to replace slow or inexperienced runners who have no running-related disability or injury.
- Once a regular season game begins, and is postponed due to rain, it shall be declared no game by the plate umpire and rescheduled if it has not gone past 4 ½ innings. If it has gone past 4 ½ innings, the team that was ahead at the completion of the last full inning is the winner.
- The Ten-Run Rule will be in effect after 4 ½ innings, provided the losing team has batted at least five times.
- All games are seven innings, except as noted above.
- The Home Team shall furnish a new game ball each game. The opposing team shall provide a secondary ball. Additional balls will be provided by the home team.
- Bases must be provided by the Home Team and must be stationary and free of rips and tears.
- Protests considered only when based on a violation or interpretation of a playing rule or the use of an ineligible player. No protests involving an umpire's call will be considered.
- All Protests must be submitted in writing within two days of the game under protest. A twenty dollar fee is required to submit all written protests. If the protest is won, the money will be refunded.
- No metal spikes allowed.
- Notice of forfeits must be made two days before the scheduled game. If this notice is not given, a forfeit penalty will be assessed equivalent to the umpire fees. A total of five unexcused forfeits will result in expulsion from the League.
- All counts start at 1-1. Only one foul ball is allowed after the batter has two strikes.
- A substitute who bats, but does not play the field is a pinch hitter, and may not enter the game a second time. The batter who was pinch-hit for, may not reenter the game.
- There must be at least three female batters in the lineup (or two female batters and one invisible female automatic out) at all times and no more than three male batters in a row in any part of the lineup.
- Except in the case of injury, a substitute cannot enter the game until the starting lineup has batted through one full rotation. Any starter who has been out of the game for one rotation may return and be inserted in any position and batting order of the players they are replacing.
- If a male batter is walked ahead of a female batter, the male batter will be awarded second base, and the female will bat.
- Outfielders (including the short fielder) must be at least 40 feet beyond the base paths before every pitch.
- After 75 minutes, all games will be one-pitch until the game is completed.
- A double-sided first base will be used for all games. A batter running through first base will touch the part of the bag in foul territory. The first baseman may only touch the white part of the base on the base path to record an out.
- Female batters will have the choice of using the standard men's ball, or the standard women's ball supplied by the Home Team.
- The automatic out (in a lineup short of players) is eligible to end an inning as the 3rd out, which includes if the automatic out is preceded by a walk (but no intentional walks are permitted to get to a final automatic out).



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- During the regular season only, a team may have a lineup of more than 11, but only by adding additional batters with at least a one-to-two ratio of women to men (if one additional player is added to the standard 11 person lineup she must be female, if two or three new players are added at least one must be female, if four new players are added at least two must be female, etc.). Such additional players will be designated hitters but may substitute into the fielding lineup freely with other persons in the batting lineup, with those other players then becoming designated hitters. But each extra designated hitter must play at least one inning in the field (and the goal should be to maximize playing time for all persons in the lineup) and any team using an extended batting lineup must always have at least three women as fielders.
- Bats will be checked against ASA Non-Approved Bat List before the first game by the umpires.
- NO multi wall or composite bats. The umpire **WILL** do a bat check before the game.
- Teams may loan players to a team that does not have enough players, but the game will count in the record books.
- Pitch height must be 6 to 12 feet with an arc. It is slow-pitch.
- Playoff games will be played with no time limits.

6. Inclement Weather:

It is the responsibility of the League Director to determine if the field is playable at least one hour before game time. The League Director will put a message on the Takoma Park Inclement Weather Line – (301) 891-7101 x 5605, by 8:35 a.m. every Sunday until the season is completed. Game umpires have the authority to postpone or cancel any games on account of inclement weather.

Coach's Name:

Date:

Address:

E-mail Address:

City/State:

Cell Phone:

Zip Code:

Other Phone: